

# WOKING'S EDWARDIAN SCHOOL REPORT

Iain Wakeford 2016

**J**ust over a year ago I wrote an article about some of the first schools in Woking in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and followed that up over the coming weeks and months with notes on the opening of Knaphill School (1877), a look at the logbook of Church Street School (1881) and the expansion of a number of local schools (in 1884). So I thought I should bring the story a little more up to date by looking at developments in education in the later Victorian and early Edwardian period.



Brookwood School opened in 1906 for 240 Children. Before then they had to go to Pirbright or Knaphill for their education.

The Children of Knaphill Council School proudly march through the streets of Woking to mark Empire Day in 1909

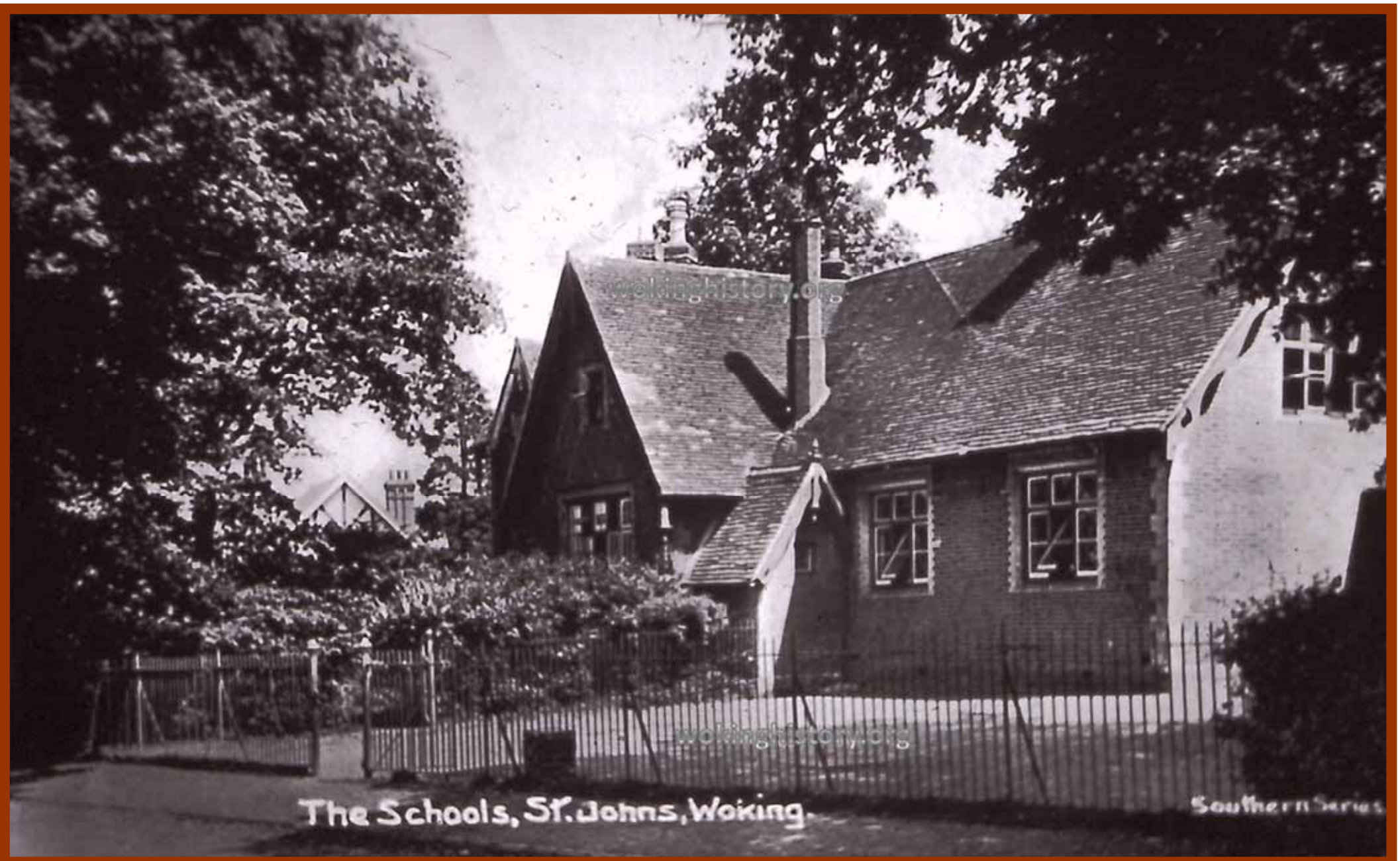


**T**he 1902 Education Act put the control of all local schools into the hands of the County Council – who immediately took over National Schools at Horsell and Byfleet and the School Boards at Pyrford & Woking,

The schools in Woking at that time were an odd mix of the old and the new. The latest School to be built was at Goldsworth, constructed between 1897-98 at a cost of £6,362 for 350 juniors and 188 infants; but the new Education Committee also inherited a site for a 240 place school at Brookwood, that finally opened its door in 1906.

Until then all the children from Brookwood had to go to school at Pirbright or Knaphill - the former being enlarged in 1889, whilst the latter was added to in 1884 to cater for 350 children (and again in 1906 for 150 children in the infant's school and just over 300 in the mixed).

Church Street School in Old Woking had likewise been extended in 1901 for 170 children, and the original National School at Westfield had been replaced by two new schools – an infant school opened in 1897 on land bought for £350 from the chairman of Woking Council (Mr Gustav Wermig) and the mixed school which appears to have been built in 1884 and then extended in 1891, 1895 and 1907 for about 290 children. All that remains of the infant school, opposite the shops in

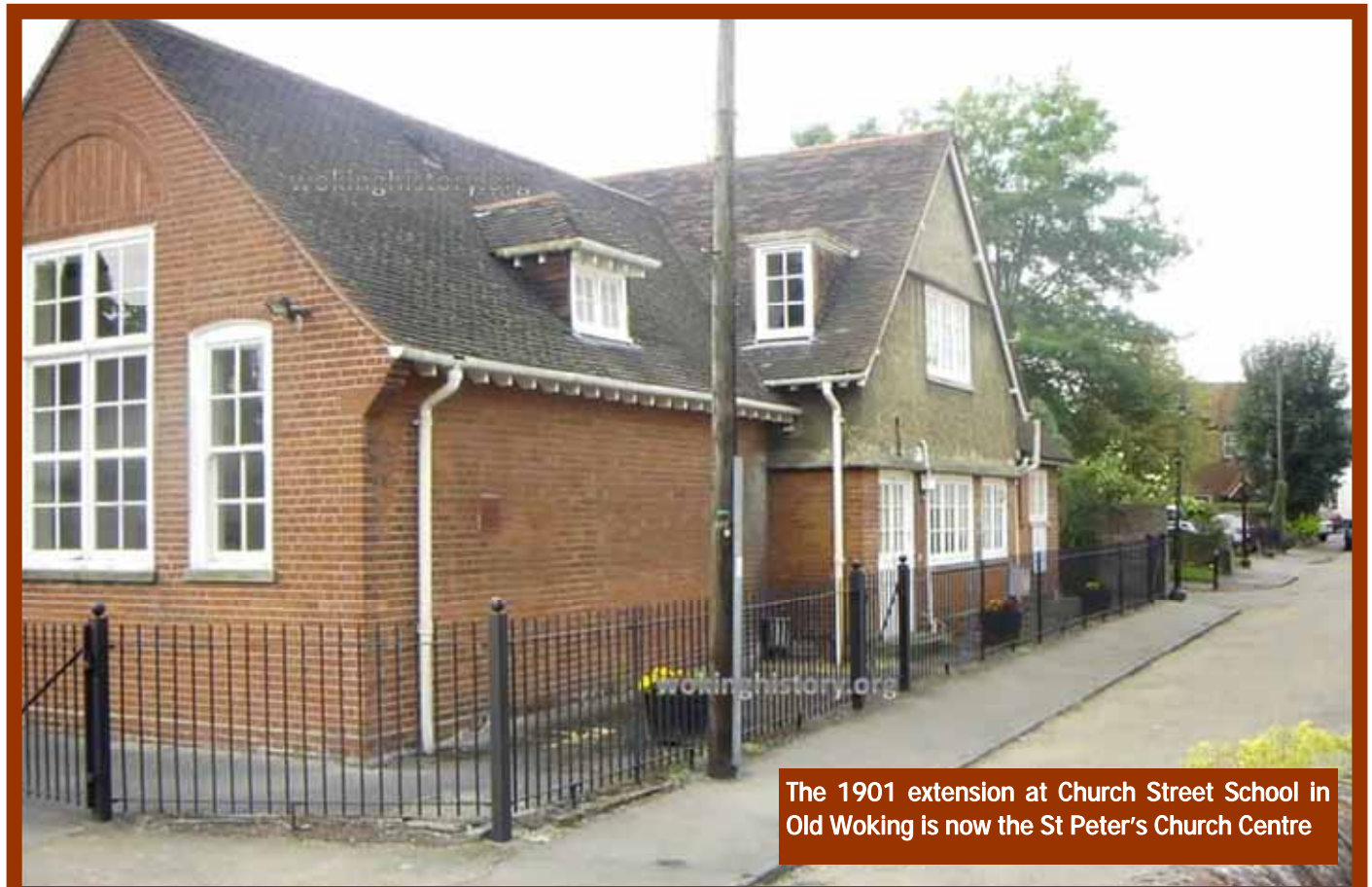
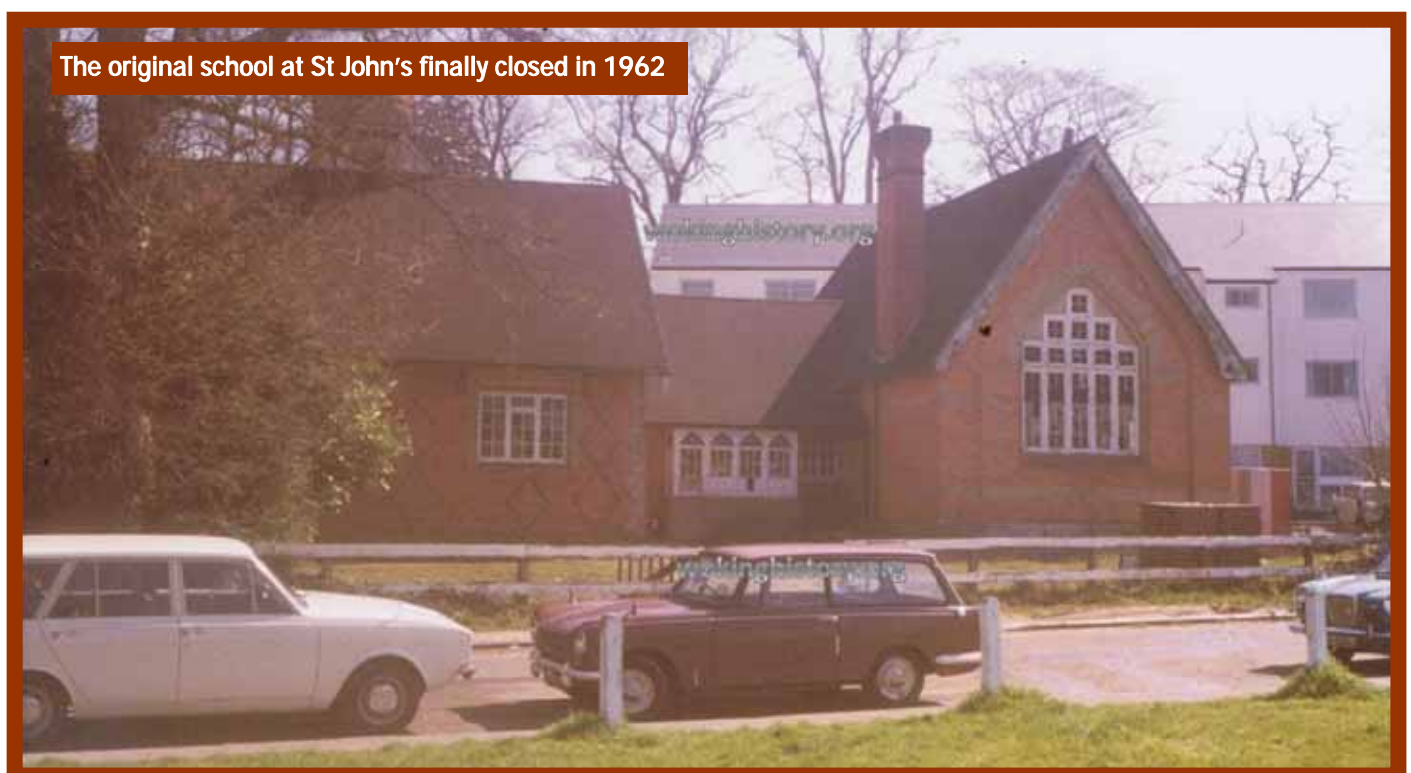


Westfield Road, are some of the iron railing, but the larger mixed school still stands and is now the Moorcroft Day Centre.

1907 also saw the opening of the new Monument Hill mixed and infant school (for 450 children), which probably took some of the pressure off the old Board School at Maybury. That had been enlarged at least three times since it opened in 1874 (extensions in 1881, 1886 and 1893) bringing the total number of pupils it could handle up to 910 – then Woking's largest school by far.

Meanwhile at St Johns, the little village school (built in about 1855 and extended in 1869) had not been enlarged since 1877. A report in 1907 noted that 'the lighting, heating and ventilation were bad. The floor was much worn in places – and the building was awkwardly planned and could not be enlarged without difficulty. It was very awkwardly arranged for supervision. It had no means of artificial light, except by oil lamps, despite the fact that the gas and electricity mains now went past the front of the school'. The school was later connected to the electricity mains, but despite the damning report of 1907 the buildings remained almost the same for the next fifty-five years until it closed in 1962 (remaining as a Sunday School and Youth Club until 1978).

The schools in Horsell, Pyrford and Byfleet had all been added to and enlarged over this period too, but it would not be until the eve of the First World War that the children of West Byfleet would be spared the long walk to get their education, and the same amount of time before secondary education was to be provided in the area – but that will have to be dealt with in more detail in a few months time.



# THE MAYBURY SCHOOL VIOLIN CLASS OF 1910?



**E**ach week, whilst compiling this roughly chronological history of Woking, I am conscious that the stories I write for the Woking Advertiser (if not this website) need to be illustrated in some way. This sometimes poses a problem where

illustrative material is allusive for an interesting story, but occasionally it is the other way around - such as this wonderful picture of the Violin Class of Maybury School in 1910 for which I have been unable to find any information.

How long the children had been practicing before the picture was taken (or how much longer they continued) I don't know, but again I would dearly love to hear from anyone who knows anything about what must have been one of Woking's more unusual school classes.

## 1909-1911 - WHEN MAYFORD FIRST HAD TWO SCHOOLS

**W**ith the Freemantles School by Mayford Green and the newly approved plans for the Hoe Valley Free School in Egley Road, Mayford is set to have two education establishments in its midst. But this is nothing new for the village as for a brief period in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it appears that Mayford also had two schools.

If you have read this column on a regular basis you will be aware that there was a school in Mayford from the 1880's known as the Mayford Industrial School -

originally an institution for 'destitute boys not convicted of crime' that transferred from Wandsworth to Byfleet in 1871 and then again to Mayford in 1887.

That school was later taken over by London County Council (and then Surrey County Council) to be run as an 'approved school' until the 1970's. When it closed the old buildings were turned into workshops etc, and a children's home called 'Kinton' built in the grounds. The Freemantles School (which originally started out in Chertsey) was built on that site in 2007.

But does anybody know anything about a second school that apparently opened in Mayford in 1908 as recorded below in the Kelly's Directory of 1909 (below left) and then again in 1911 (below right), by which time Mrs Ramsey had been replaced by Mrs Mary Goble, who according to the census that year lived with her husband, Edwin, at Moordown, Mary Road in Guildford.

What happened to it after 1911 I do not know. I can find nothing of the school (or Mrs Goble) in the Kelly's Directory of 1913, so if anybody can tell me anything else about Mrs Goble, Ms Ramsey or the Mayford Catholic School, I would be most grateful.



Mayford Catholic (mixed), opened in 1908, for 54; average attendance, 37; Mrs. A. Ramsay, mistress

Mayford Industrial School (boys), erected in 1887, for 180 destitute boys; average number, 176; James William March, superintendent

Mayford Catholic (mixed), opened in 1908, for 54; average attendance, 42; Mrs. Mary Goble, mistress

Mayford Industrial School (boys), erected in 1887, for 180 boys; average number, 180; James William March, supt